

REMARKS

Claim 16 is directed to the embodiment of the presently cancelled Claim 15, presented in independent form. As presently claimed the embodiment is characterized in the absence of a "cover" layer from the structure of the laminate.

Claim 15 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,733,651 to Wank et al (herein Wank). This rejection is traversed.

Wank disclosed a laminate that is characterized in that the printed decoration is protected from smearing and abrasion because it lies between a cover film and the support layer – see column 11, lines 65 et seq.

As amended, the structure of the claimed laminate is determined by the recited process steps that preclude a cover film.

The rejection under section 102(b) is believed addressed and overcome by the above.

Protection of the invention embodied in the withdrawn Claims 10-14 will be pursued in the Divisional Patent Application.

Believing the above represent a complete response to the Office Action and that the application is in condition for allowance, applicants request the earliest issuance of an indication to this effect.

Respectfully submitted,

By



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